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A N
E P I S T L E
O F
Caution to Friends

To take heed of that Treacherous Spirit that is entred in-
to W. R. and his Abettors.

(As appears in his Malicious Book, falsly called,
THE
Christian-Quaker, &c.)

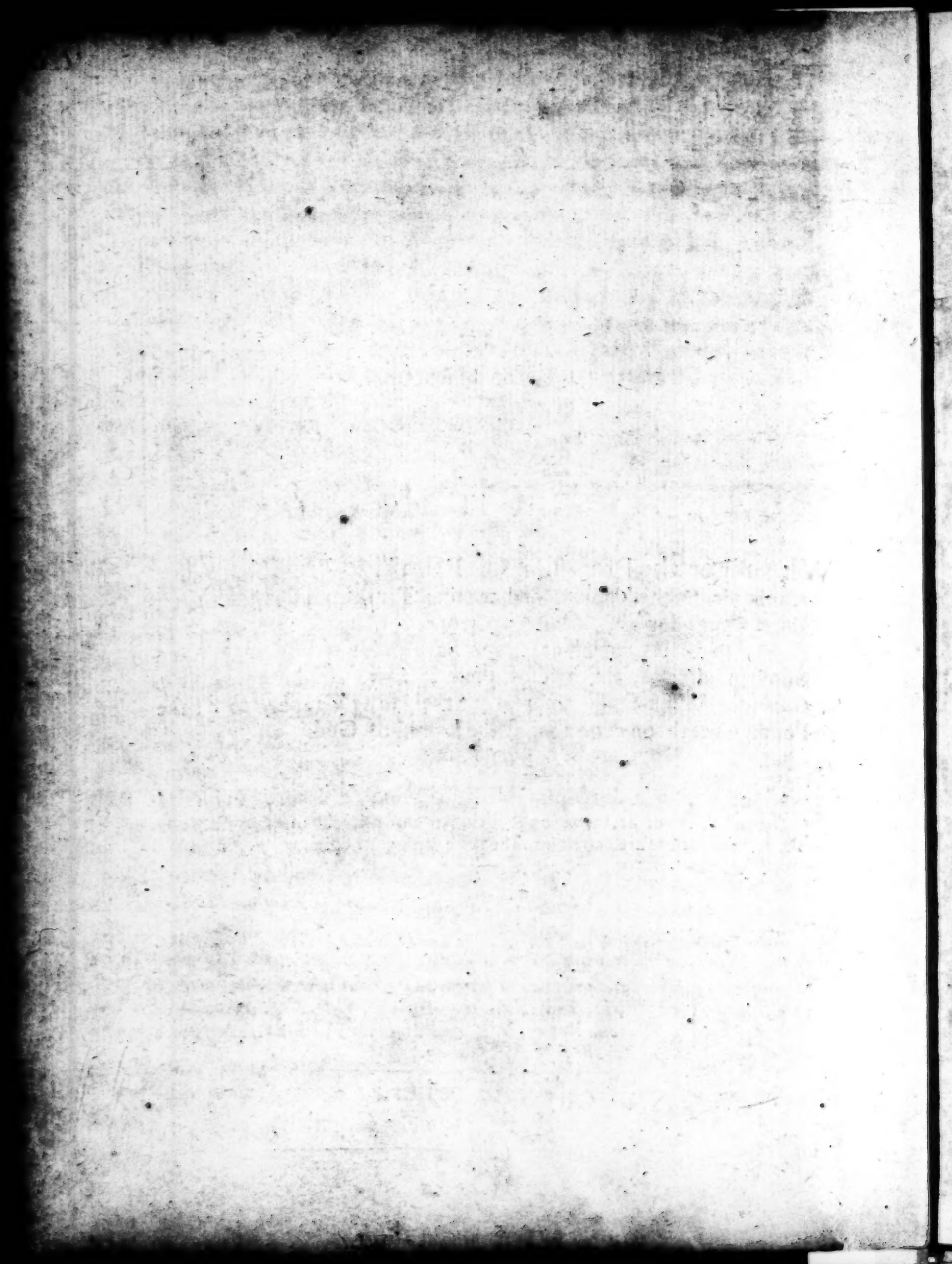
Who under the Profession of Primitive Truth, are be-
traying it to the World, and putting Truth's Lambs into their
Bears Skins, for the World to worrey, because they have no
Power to do it themselves; who have published their Wicked
Book in *Asklen*, the Fire of their Infamy, and have told it in
Gath, the Wine-press, to press out their fowr Grapes, to set the
Peoples Teeth on edge against the Lambs of God.

With wholsome Advice and Counsel, by way of Infor-
mation, that the Simple-minded may not be Ensnared by the
Crafts and Wiles of Satan; through such Fallen Antichristian Instruments as
W. R. and such as are entred into the same Malicious Spirit with him.

C. Taylor.

*When the Unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man, he walketh through dry places,
seeking Rest, and finding none. Then he saith, I will return into my House;
from whence I came out, and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and
garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other Spirits, more
Wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there; and the last State
of that man is worse than the first, Mat. 12. 43.*

London, Printed for John Brighthurst, at the Sign of the
Book in Grace-Church-street, near Cornhill, 1681.



THe following Epistle of Caution to Friends being given me to Print, it hath several times rise in my Mind, to joyn a short Testimony to it, against that Spirit of Division, and its Fruits, by way of Caution also, that no more may be led astray through the subtil Wiles and Insinuations of the Enemy of their Souls, who this day (I am well satisfied) makes it his business, first to divide and scatter the Sheep from the Fold, and then make a Prey upon them; for thus it was with me for some time before I knew of W. R.'s Book being to be Printed; and I being thus prepared by the Enemy, needed no Arguments to induce me to that which was become so natural to me: Wherefore, Reader, it rises in my Heart to Caution all such whom it may concern, to take heed how they hear, lest they hear amiss; and how they speak, lest by their speaking they add strength to those who are already in some measure led astray by the Enemy, to look out at others, when they should look at Home; and not to harbour up anything one against another, or against the Body, though seemingly never so small (for Prejudice will eat as a Canker) nor construe every thing in the worst sense (as I did) for whoever do, the Hurt will be their own, as it was mine.

And as to W. R.'s Book (which is part of the Fruits of that dividing Spirit (gotten up of late among some professing the Truth) entitled, The Christian-Quaker Distinguished from the Apostate and Innovator, &c. it cannot but be expected, that I (who was in so large a manner concerned, as to get it Printed; and afterwards disowned it) should shew some Reason for my so doing; especially since it has been so noised about, both in City & Country by the Propagators and Encouragers thereof, that a Friend Printed it, I can do no less (in Conscience to God, and for the clearing his Truth and People) than declare publicly, that I was led thereto by the Enemy of my Souls Peace (though I saw it not at first to be of an Evil Nature) and when I saw my Peace was departed, & a weight & load came upon my Mind, I would have had the peace of the Lord restored unto me while I was concerned in the Book; but instead thereof, my Trouble was increased, and I saw not a way to escape the Reward I then was sensible would be my Portion, if the Lord was not merciful to me; in which time of Exercise, Breathings often went up to the Lord, that if I might find favour in his sight, he would be pleased to shew me the way how I should come out of this snare & great sin against him, and enjoy his Peace: and the answer I in that day received was, That I was not to expect Peace with the Lord while I persisted in the thing which caused his Displeasure; which was the real cause of my putting the Book out of my hands before finish, the Spirit of the Lord.

Lord pursuing me from time to time (shewing me of what an Evil Tendency it was) till I had rid me of it (though now I stand accused of Injustice for so doing) and then did the Lord, who had given me Trouble, speak Peace to me, and gave me access (in measure) to the Throne of his Grace; for which blessed Work, I desire he may be forever Praised and Magnified by and through me whilst I have a Being here.

And as to the Publishers of this Book of W. R. it rises in my Heart to entreat you all, to sink down and wait low in the Valley of Humility before the Lord, and hearken to hear what Counsel the pure meek Spirit of the Lord (who is the Healer of Breaches) saith to you, and yield unto it; for if things were as is pretended in that Book (which I cannot believe) I aver the Lord is against anyones discovering the Nakedness of his Brethren or Fathers in his spiritual Israel this day, as in the days of Ham, or laying stumbling Blocks in the way of the weak, as in the days of Balaam, &c. And let me ask you, What advantage will it bring to the Lord's blessed Truth? and what Edification will be reaped by it? and what Honour will it bring to his Name? When I was considering the thing (after my Eye began to open) a dread from the Lord seized upon me, and the Lord shewed me, that it would be a heinous offence committed against him, and that I should thereby become Instrumental to declare in Gath & publish in Askelon all the dirty villifying stuff therein inserted, which was forbidden to the People of the Lord in the days of Old, lest the Uncircumcised in Heart and Ears take occasion to rejoyce over the People of the Lord: And what will Truths Adversaries at this day do less, think you? Well, Oh Lord my God, who hast shewed Mercy unto me, if it be thy will, extend thy Mercy unto others, who are yet concerned in the spreading and publishing of that Book, that they also may come to see their Error and great Sin against thee, and Repent, and so come to obtain Mercy at thy Hand before it be too late; Amen.

And to all such who have, or may have an itching Ear to read that Book, it rises in my Heart to caution you to forbear satisfying your minds therein, for the Enemy may take advantage upon you, thereby to draw out your minds to take every thing for granted that's therein inserted, & so cause you to look out at others instead of looking after the trimming your own Lamps.

And now having eased my Spirit of what lay upon me to write, I shall at this time conclude with the Apostle Paul to the Ephesians, Cap. 4. vers. 1, 2, 3. I therefore beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith you are called, with all Lowliness and Meekness, with Long-suffering forbearing one another in Love, endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace.

John Bringhurst.

AN

*An Epistle of Caution to Friends, to
take heed of that Treacherous Spirit that
is entred into W. R. and his Abettors,
(as appears in his Malicious Book, falsely
called, The Christian-Quaker, &c.)*

Having seen a Book written by W. R. I have considered the end of his Writing and Printing it, which is to abuse and misrepresent the faithful People of the Lord, who in scorn are called *Quakers*, especially such as have been faithful to God in their Day and Generation, eminently known to have been such, in this our Day, by being Instrumental to turn Hundreds and Thousands to Righteousness, especially that dear and eminent Servant of God G. F. who for his Works sake in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, many do esteem and honour; and honourable he is to this day, though such as W. R. and his Adherents, who (because of Prejudice and Malice) endeavour, what in them lies, to asperse him, and abuse him, and contradict his blessed Life, in which he is still made Instrumental in the hand of the Lord, to bring forth blessed things, for the Service of God and his Truth, from the Oracles of the divine Breath, to the Praise of his Name forever.

The Title of his Book he has Printed, is, *The CHRISTIAN QUAKER Distinguished from the APOSTATE and INNOVATOR.*

Sad it is to consider the Work of the Enemy, and the Spoil he endeavours to make in the blessed Church of God, and First-born, in this our Day; blessed be the Lord, and honoured be his Name forever, who has kept a Remnant faithful from Back-sliding into *Error, Heresie and Schism*, who retain their First Love, and the Sense they first received in his Eternal Power and Spirit; and by this and through this Sense, they are able to judge of things that differ.

differ. And if the Devil say (or any whom he has deluded, and led into Blasphemy) *They are Apostatized, or are become Innovators,* and so would cast an Odium upon them, and falsely accule them; We know this is the same Spirit, though it may be under another Profession, that alwayes hated the Truth, and despised the heavenly Counsel, and order of it; and there were such in the Apostles dayes, who were unfaithful to God, who abused such as kept the Faith, and yet retained the Profession of Faith and Christianity in those Primitive Times; yea, *Paul*, that eminent Servant of God, and such as were his faithful Companions in the work of the Gospel, were not spared by them, who loved to reign as Kings without them, and set up themselves as Apostles and Ministers, to lord over Gods Heritage, and to seduce the Simple-hearted from the Obedience of the Faith, and so became Instruments in the hands of Satan, to bring in the Apostacy, which entered by departing from the Power of God, and setting up themselves over the People, by usurping Authority over their Consciences, yet under the Profession of Faith and a good Conscience, which notwithstanding they had made Shipwrack of. This cursed Spirit of Satan is now entred into the Heart and Soul of *W. R.* and such of his Abettors as own the *Printing and Publishing* of his Wicked Book aforesaid, wherein he has accused the faithful Brethren at large, and with a full Mouth, of that which he himself is grossly guilty of, that is, *Apostacy and Innovation.* And for his calling his Book, *The Christian Quaker, &c.* it is notoriously Blasphemous, and far unlike the *True Christian Quaker*; and let him prove; when at any time any *true Christian Quaker* was Instrumental to bring forth such a Work as he has done in his Book, and to gratifie such a People as he has done by *Printing* of it, to the view of the World, as it were to call and invite the Wickedest of men, and most Malicious against Truth, to see and behold the *Quakers* Differences, and as much as in him lies, to represent the Best of the *Quakers*, as I may so say, naked to the view of the Rabble, and the worst of the Instruments of Satan, by them to be Derided, Mocked and Persecuted, as their Lord and Master Jesus Christ was; to render them Bad and Ungodly, to put Weapons into the hands of the Wicked, to War against them with, and as much as in them lies, to destroy their Lives and Testimonies in the Truth of Jesus.

Oh!

Oh! what shame is this that W. R. and such as own him in his Writing and Publishing of his Book, should call it, *The Christian Quaker, &c.* when it is manifest to the wise in Heart, that it was written from a worse Spirit than that of *Ham*, who uncovered his Father's Nakedness to his Brethren, and therefore was accursed: Now *Ham*, what he did may be said to be a hasty rash Action, done on a suddain, without Premeditation; but W. R. his Work is far worse; for he hath long premeditated and laboured to bring forth his Wicked Book in Print, and by so doing hath endeavoured to uncover the Nakedness of such as once he counted his Brethren and Elders, or Fathers, whom God hath clothed; but he hath, as it were, endeavoured to present them naked to the view of the whole World, by the Publishing of his Book, which already has been read and perused by *People, Priests and Professors*, who are great Enemies to the Truth; and so at once has gratified them all, by Printing and Publishing his Wicked Book, against Gods faithful Servants; but that alwayes was the Work of the Enemy in all Ages, to do Wickedly.

For *Cain* Apostatizing from the Faith and Fear of God became Wroth, because God accepted his Brother *Abel's* Offering, and rejected his, and therefore he turned against him and slew him. Of this Line of *Cain* is W. R. and his Abettors, and not of the Line of *Abel*, for he envied not, nor hated his Brother, nor sought to do him the least Injury, so that his Wicked Brother *Cain* fell upon him without a Just cause, as now W. R. does in Print, against Gods faithful Servants, whose Offerings are pure before the Lord, and Time will clear their Innocency, that in what they do, they seek God's Glory, and the Prosperity of his blessed Truth. Well, this Blood will cry for Vengeance to God against W. R. and his Adherents, as ever the Blood of Righteous *Abel* cried against *Cain*, for Murdering him. *Cain* murdered his Brother's Body; but W. R. does what in him lies, to shed and let out the Life of his Brethrens Souls, by rendring them Dead and Apostatized from the Truth that lives forever.

Those Apostates and Innovators, *Korah, Dathan and Abiram*, and their Company, with the Hundred and Fifty Princes of the Assembly, Famous in the Congregation, men of Renown, their Conspiracy was strong against *Moses and Aaron*, and the reason was, because

because they departed from the Faith and Fear of God, and so lost the sense of his Love and Presence, which in some measure, no doubt, they had known, through the Word of Faith, that was in their Hearts, and might have retained, if they had stood in God's Fear, and then they would not have rebelled, and so lost the Sense of that Accepted State with God, which *Moses* and *Aaron* were kept in; nor have Apostatized to have contradicted the good Conduct of *Moses* and *Aaron*, according to Gods just Appointments; nor have been Innovators under that Dispensation, to have endeavoured the *Alteration of the Government established by the Lord*; nor would they have endeavoured to have set up themselves over the People, above their true Conditions and Places, nor to have thrust out *Moses* and *Aaron*, that so they might have done according to their own Wills and Lusts, and so have been Arbitrary and Tyrannical in their Government, without the Power of God, in opposition to it; for did not they profess *Holyness*, and that *all the Congregation was Holy*, and that *Moses* and *Aaron* took too much upon them, and lift up themselves above the Congregation of the Lord? Had they not these plausible Pretences? which were, it seems, much taking with the Congregation, into which by cunning Deceit and false Flattery, they had insinuated; and so the Cursed Presumption of these false Pretenders, was punished with a Dreadful End: *The Earth opened her Mouth, and swallowed them up, and their Houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, & all their Goods; they and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the Pit, &c.* A Dreadful End, and just from the hand of the Lord.

So now, let W. R. and his Adherents, dread and fear the living God, who have attempted such manifest Rebellion against Gods pure Power, in his blessed People, and holy Servants, by rendering them *Apostates and Innovators*; for what have they done (to deserve the Name of *Apostates and Innovators*) more than what the Lord has laid upon them, and given them Power to do, in his eternal Counsel? What have they brought into the Church of God, or been Instrumental in, then to establish it in Peace and Unity? And if God hath made use of *O. F.* more especially to bring good things from him to his Church, or as his Messenger, to be faithful in his Message, to give in that blessed Gospel Order and holy Government of Christ, God hath shewn unto him in his holy Spirit, and so hath Contributed largely in this Work, even beyond many others; why should

should he or others, found in such a blessed Service, be *Envyed* and *spoke Evil against*, and be accounted *Apostates* and *Innovators*, and to *take too much upon them*? Remember *Korah* and his company, how they fell, and were swallowed up forever with divine Vengeance; and no question but *Moses* and *Aaron* were tender towards them, to have reclaimed them from their great Presumption, Pride and Arroganey, but they would not hear them, but became desperate in their Encounter against God's Power and true Authority; and therefore God would not spare them from Destruction, but he was at that time entreated for the poor deluded Congregation; and it is said, they got up from the Tabernacle of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, &c. and the two Hundred and Fifty Princes, who fell into desperate Presumption, and endeavoured to run down *Aaron*, and his Seed from the Priesthood, these were consumed with Fire, for their Presumption, in offering Incense in opposition to Gods appointment, under that Dispensation, who had established that Service in *Aaron*, and his Seed only.

So, it is a most dangerous thing to oppose God's divine Power, and holy Authority, and run against and despise his anointed Ones, whom he has anointed with his holy spiritual Oyl, to minister unto and serve his Church and People, in whatsoever he commands them, who are Ministers of the Spirit, and not of the Letter.

They that go from the Power of the Lord are *Apostates* and *Innovators*; and it is they only that would Innovate, or alter the holy Appointment of the Power of God, and the Order and Government thereof, because they themselves are gone from it in their own Particulars; how can they love the Order, Government and Discipline of the Power of God, who love not the Government of it, and to be guided by it in their own Particulars? Thus came in the *Apostasy*, thus came in *Innovations*, and divers *Alterations*, into the Church of God, and a contending for them, that was the ground of setting up divers Forms, and Meetings, out of the Power, in which Forms and Meetings Gods Power and Presence was wanting; these the Apostle bids turn away from, who had retained the Form of Godliness, but denied the Power. But the Antient Apostles and Elders of the Church of God, kept the Faith, which stood in the Power of God; and unto them was the continuance of his Oracles, and heavenly Openings, Visions and Revelations, that in the holy Spirit,
and

and Power of the Living God, they might serve, obey and worship him; these when they met together, and had Councils and Meetings for the Service and Benefit of the holy Church of God, did wait in the Spirit of Life, to receive from God his Mind and Authority, which they might lay upon the Churches, or signify to them, what was to be done, suitable or agreeable to every State, and Time the Church was in, according to her growth and encrease, in the spiritual Light and Grace; and therein the Spiritual-minded and Simple-hearted waiting upon the Lord, come to be satisfied with the divine Will of God, opened and communicated to them by the Lord, through his Servants and Gospel Ministers. And the Simple-hearted *Christians* did not cry out against *Paul*, and others of those his Primitive Fellow-Labourers, and call them *Innovators* and *Apostates*, or such as were fallen from the Faith, or to *take too much upon them*, but with Love and good Will in the Faith, observed the Decrees of the Apostles and Elders, and all was sweet and lovely amongst them, in so doing; and the false Apostles, false Brotherhood, false Ministers and Antichrists, had no place there, so long as they kept blessedly together, in the Fellowship of Gods Eternal Spirit and Power, for then did they shine together in the Lustre and Brightness of Gods Wisdom, and Image of Jesus Christ, mutually serving one another in the Love of God, and edifying one another in the most holy Faith, and in that state a greater than *Solomon* was known amongst them, *Christ Jesus*, and the Primitive pure Love of God to possess their Hearts; so that those who kept their Habitations together in the fear of God, and Faith that stands in its Eternal Power, were the true Church and Body of the Lord Jesus, in which was the true Harmony and spreading of the heavenly Table, for every Child to receive from God his appointed Food and Nourishment, to eat the Flesh and drink the Blood of the Lord Jesus, and discern the Lord's Body, in true Temperance, Sobriety and Moderation in Christ Jesus, where there is neither Damnation nor Condemnation, but a true real Growth, and Encreasing with the Encrease of God, unto a true and substantial Man in Christ Jesus; such flourished in their Day and Time, Age and Generation, and are upon record a good savour to God and his faithful People, who are made Partakers of the same blessed and heavenly Life with them: Of this Line and Spiritual Generation, are such now as live

in the true reverend fear of God, and in his Power, and are shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace, and so are safe, preserved, and continued in the Bosom, and under the shadow of a most tender Father, mindful of his Mercies, and the Continuance of his Kindness, who has kept them hitherto over all Apostates, and Prophane, to the praise of his everlasting Name, who is God over all blessed for evermore.

But there were then, and are such now, as are Apostatized, and gone from the Power of God, and the Sence of those who are kept in it, (yet notwithstanding they may in words profess the Power, and Truth as at first appeared) and that is the ground of their Ignorance and Weakness of understanding, and uncapableness to know and discern what is of God, and what is of the Enemy, who are his true and faithful Servants and People, who still have kept their Habitations in the Truth; and who are Apostatized, and would bring in Innovations, in contradiction to the will of God and his heavenly Power amongst his People, and are become twice dead, plucked up by the Roots, and thorow Perverseness, Peevishness, and Cross-spiritedness, enter into the way of *Cain*, and Spirit of *Korah*, and his Company, of which number and sort is *W. R.* and his Adherents, that is, such as own him in the *Writing, Printing and Publishing* his Book, falsely called, *The Christian Quaker*, &c.

But though he and others, may harden themselves against good Admonition to their Destruction (except they Repent) and an Earthly Spirit may swallow them up, as outwardly the Earth opened and swallowed up *Korah, Dathan and Abiram*, and their Confederates, and also the *fifty intruding and rebelling Princes*, and *men of Renown* (so called) were consumed with the Fire of the Lord; Yet I hope the Lord will be merciful to many, who yet see not through their Deceit, yet may be somewhat intangled by them, and misled through their false and insinuating-spiritedness, yet are not hardened to Perdition; I hope God will deliver such in due time, who in their Hearts singly and nakedly cry to him, for a true Decision, in matters wherein they have not yet a clear understanding and established Judgment.

Do not *W. R.* and his Adherents yet understand the way of the wicked Spirit, whither it leads, and how it has led many into an evil condition, to forsake the living God, and his Power, and so

became Grand Opposers of the same Heavenly Power, and Cross of Jesus; and some at last have been so fool-hardy, to split and break themselves in pieces forever, by *Printing and Publishing* against us, out of Envy and Malice, as *W. R.* has done, as at large may be seen in his Book, to render us *degenerated, gone from our first Principles and Power of God.*

But how have such prospered! Do they not remember the going out of many in *J. N.* his time, and what Scandal they brought on Truth in that day, by departing from the Power of God, to the wounding of their own Souls, and the Souls of many tender-hearted Friends and Brethren? and would we not then have saved them with our tender Advice? but some perished and became perfectly obstinate, and ran out from the Truth, and never more returned into it, that we know of; And did not *R. R.* and some others, who became hardened in Prejudice, *Write and Print* against us, who kept our Habitations in the Truth, and especially most maliciously against that dear Servant of the Living God *G. F.* who kept his Habitation and Authority in the living Truth, over all those unclean Spirits who then troubled the *Israel of God.*

But that Day passed over, and we saw through it and over it; and they who then returned not through Judgment, do not so much as retain the *Profession of Truth*; Did not they then say, *We were gone from the Power and were Apostatized, and were setting up Forms and preaching to the People like Priests, &c.* But said, they themselves were entering into a further Dispensation of Joy, and Liberty, and Love; but that feigned love turned into Envy, and at last it proved they were gone from the Power of God into their own Imagination, which would not keep them from doing things unseemly, and so became treacherous to their own Sou's, and to the Truth of God, and some perished in their Gain-sayings.

And one *R. S.* a *Cheshire Man*, when he turned from the Truth into Prejudice against Good Advice and Order; have they not heard how he Apostatized, and had his Children sprinkled by the Priest, and so became Treacherous and false to God, his People, and his own Soul; and then at last he did as *W. R.* and his Adherents have now done, who own the *Printing and Publishing* his wicked Book, called, the *Christian Quaker*, &c. I say, then at last he maliciously *Printed*, to revile and reproach the Truth, and the Possessors of it; for

for when such as *W. R.* and his Abettors have hardened their Hearts against good Admonition, until they have fallen into open opposition against the Power of God, his faithful Servants and blessed People, who keep the Truth, then they have come to be shameless, and to enter into the same *Opposing, Malicious, Contradicting Spirit* with the envious Priests and Professors, and so have become blind Leaders of the Blind, and they who have been such Leaders, and who have been led by them, have fallen into the Ditch, and Perished in their Gain-saying, except they have found a place for Repentance.

And many others, when they have been hardened in Rebellion and Wickedness against the Truth and the Possessors of it, who have kept their Habitations in it, maliciously as now *W. R.* at last hath done, have Printed and Published, to the view of the World, which when they have appeared so wicked, it hath been a manifest sign of their Destruction and Death, as to Truth, as *J. Penniman, J. B.* and others; and so now *W. R.* at last Printing and Publishing his wicked malicious Book, it is a manifest token of his Destruction as to Truth, and the ruin and undoing of his Soul forever, and the Souls of all, who in this Spiritedness adhere to him, and own the Printing and Publishing of his Book, falsely called, the *Christian Quaker, &c.* except they Repent; And this from God I have received concerning his and their state at present, and Pray, that if it be possible, he and they all who unite with him in this work of Wickedness, may find a place of Repentance; for their case is miserable, and Wo and Misery will be their portion forever, except they Repent; for the God of Heaven is angry with them, and it will break forth upon them, and they shall know that he is the Living God with his People, that they may stand and be established by him forever, and that neither *W. R.* nor his Adherents will be able to pull them down, even such whom he hath so vilified and abused in his Book, and especially that dear Servant of God *G. F.* whom he hath so basely bespattered in his Book, and Printed and Published this to the World, as I may say, to put such a monstrous shape upon him, as that the very worst of men may fall upon him. Is this Love? nay, it is *Wickedness* and monstrous *Iniquity*; and the burthen of *W. R.* and his Adherents, which they must bear for these things, will be too heavy for them; and Truth will prevail over all,
and

and God will put his Beauty and Comeliness still more and more upon such as dear *G. F.* and others who are faithful to the living God, and a thorow Decission will come, that in the end, the Simple-hearted, that fear the Lord in their Hearts, may be undeceived of the false Coverings of *W. R.* and his Abettors, and then they will be easily seen and discerned, as they are in their Nature, to the view of every Upright-hearted Friend that loves the Truth; and so their rank will be found to be the same with *R. S. J. Penniman, R. R.* and the rest afore-mentioned, who went the same way, and at last grew wicked in Printing and Publishing, as *W. R.* hath now done.

And whereas some professing Truth have been offended with *Mens and Womens Meetings*, as now established amongst us by the Power of God, and the Practices of such Meetings, calling them *Innovations*, (viz.) *That it is a bringing in of new things into the Church, or altering the state of it, &c.*

Unto this I Answer; That *Government* and *Good Order* is needful to be established in every Family, much more in the Church of God, that every Member of the true Church may know its Place and Service in the Body, fitted thereunto by the Power of God; then will it fall in naturally and in course, that every Member will know its Office, and whereunto it is called, with the heavenly Call of Christ Jesus, and these are they that take their Possessions in the Life, Power, and Wisdom of God, and are fit to do service in the Church, and of such Members is, and ought to be, the composition of *Mens and Womens Meetings*, who reverence and fear the Living God, and have a care of his Service, and that all that profess Truth, and that are turned to it, may be preserved in it, then such faithful Members, and savoury sanctified Ones, whether men or women, when they meet together in their Meetings, meet with the Lord in the midst of them, and his pure Wisdom and Power to guide them in that they are called unto, as they faithfully and truly wait upon him in such Meetings; so the Work is the Lord's they are about, and those that are faithful unto God, and Eye his Power, and seek his Glory in the course of their Lives, will not fail to do the same in these Meetings, and as so, then let the Wise in Heart judge, *Whether this be not the Way of God, for the establishment of Gospel-Government in his Church, that all may be kept sweet and savoury in his House, to his Praise forever.*

And

And how this can be called *Innovation*, and *Apostatizing into Forms*, is certainly Monstrous, and great Ignorance, where the Power of God is kept unto; for no other Meetings, we do affirm in Gods Presence, we account right, but as they are *Constituted in the Power God*, and kept in it; and this we affirm to have been the Primitive Christians Practice, so long as they kept to the Power; but when there is a going from the Power, and that comes to be lost, as to them, then all Meetings are alike, to such; and so came in the *Apostacy and Innovations*, after the Primitive pure Times, and then the Key of knowledge came to be lost, and Antichristian Formality to be set up, and gradually many strange Ceremonies and superstitious Things to be observed; and that was all wrong, and the Order of God's Power and Truth was wanting in those times, as to the true Church and the true Government of it, because their Churches, so called, were said to be *visible Churches*, consisting of *Nations or Parishes*, &c. But the true Church was invisible, to the Carnal-minded Ones, and such as did not fear the Lord, nor worship him in Spirit and Truth; though God had his Witnesses in the darkest times of Ignorance, *Popery* and Superstition, which had spread over all, and Nations had drunk the Whores Cup of filthy Abominations, yet some Witnesses were raised up by the Lord, to bear witness against the Wickedness and Abomination of those times.

Now the true Church of God, which is coming to appear out of her Wilderness state, begins to flourish, and to become as a Garden watered and pruned by the pure Power of God, and for this end God in our Day has raised up many Witnesses, blessed be his Name forever, and they are at work in his Garden, the Heavenly Plantation of his own Hand, and seek his Glory in all things.

And now, the Heavenly Wisdom sees meet, to give forth again *the Gospel-Order and Discipline*, as in the Church of Christ, before the Apostacy entred, and makes choice of such as are capable in this Work, and Spiritual-minded; and when they come together, they can rejoyce in the enjoyment of God's presence with them; and the Holy Order of the Gospel is committed to such, whether Men or Women: And whether in these Meetings, or in other Meetings, any thing be said or done thorow Infirmity, or want of a good Understanding in some, who may come to such

Meetings, that does not overthrow the constitution of any Meeting, the Power of God hath set up, and is the Authority of; but the Endeavour is and ought to be, *that there may be a growth, in the Truth in all these things, by such as are faithful, until the House of God be established in its Glory, and God's heavenly Wisdom and Power shine through all.*

So the Foundation of *good Meetings*, and *good Order* in the Church of God, is truly laid amongst us by the Lord; and it is he that lays those good things upon us, which we do in our Men and Womens Meetings, in relation to *good Order* in *Marriages*; and many other necessary things, which are done in such Meetings bring honour to God; for the state of the Churches is enquired into, *that every true Necessity may be answered*; and, if possible, *every disorderly thing may be separated, and done away*; and the living innocent-hearted Ones may be encouraged in their Obedience and Faithfulness to God, helped and assisted in their Sufferings; and the Disobedient and Unfaithful may be exhorted to Obedience, and instructed in things relating to their Conditions; that all Loose Liberty may be kept out of the Church of God, and Youth or Young People, whether Male or Female, may not be encouraged to a Loose Liberty, in any thing, but may be truly subject to the Power of God, and the Order of it in his Church, that all may be kept pure and clean. And what God hath joyned together, let no man or men put assunder or divide, in crying down *Womens Meetings*, some rude, ungodly-spirited Ones calling them an *Idol* and an *Image*, and presenting *Marriage* before them, they call, *Dancing about an Idol*, and such filthy and unfavoury stuff as that is, is cast out from the unclean Spirit of foul and un sanctified minds: and some say, *They deny Womens Meetings, Root and Branch*, and much more such Unfavouriness, and Abusive Language, proceeds from them, who would be *sticklers* in the Church of God, and would reign as *Kings* without their faithful Brethren, to set up themselves in an abusive, presumptuous, proud, scornful and disdainful Spirit.

And these are such as are *Sticklers* and *Promoters* of *W.R.'s* Printed Book aforementioned, and some such are his Factors in selling them for him; though *J. S.* their great Friend and Elder, says, *He is not against Womens Meetings*. So see what confusion they are in.

Now

Now faithful Womens Meetings are blessed of God, and we are living Witnesses of God's heavenly presence with them; and We will be to those who endeavour to scatter them, and pull down the Services which they are appointed unto; better they had never been Born, except they Repent; and that which is their great Confirmation against all the Opposition of the wicked Spirited, that rise up against them, is the feeling of God's blessed heavenly Power and Presence in the midst of them, which is a manifest sign of God's accepting of them in their coming together, to wait upon him, and present themselves before him, to do that Work and Service in his Fear and Dread which they are appointed to do.

So, let all slanderous Tongues forever be silent, in calling such Meetings, or the Services performed in them, in the good Order of Truth and Gospel Power, *Innovations* and *Apostasizing from the Truth*, and a *setting up empty Forms, Images and Idols*; but God's Power in all Ages hath had its *Form and Manner of Appearance*, and who shall limit it, and say, *Thou far shall it bring forth, and no farther?*

Therefore, I charge every one, in the fear of God, to take heed of kicking against the Pricks, and turning against any thing the Power of God brings forth, to be done and observed; and that all be tender of the Services one of another, which God may appoint unto, that the Spirit of God may not be quenched in any, or that either Men or Women be discouraged from going on in the Work of the Meetings, in what the Lord may have for them to do; but rather let us encourage them, as much as in us lies, that so without Interruption, the heavenly Power of the living God, may still have its Passage through Men and Women, Male and Female, Young or Old, both in their Meetings, and out of Meetings: and let all take heed of a cross Cankered Spirit, which through Prejudice is ready to carp at every thing that good and honest Friends do in their Meetings, and pleased with little or nothing; for they that are entred into that Spirit, are become Fighters against God in a large Measure, and Disturbers of the Church's Peace.

But some may object, *These things were not in the Beginning, when Truth broke forth amongst us, but are Innovations brought in since, and are of a dangerous Consequence, to the establishing and setting up Forms, and bringing in the Apostacy.*

I Answer ; What was in the beginning, we very well know, and far better than many do who talk so much of it ; We know the Power of God was in the Beginning, and raised up many to Life, who had been dead in Sins and Trespases, that was its first Works, and the effects of it was Righteousness ; and so the Lord is raising, and hath raised up a People that they may serve him, and may be his in this Day wherein he is making up his Jewels ; and these blessed Jewels are not made up at once, but through the divers Operations and Ministrations of his Power ; and before there was a People raised, there was no occasion for *Men and Womens Meetings* ; but by degrees Truth increased, and many were raised ; and afterwards some ran out into Scandalous and Disorderly Practices, in Marrying, and in Disorderly Living, &c. And also, besides these things, other true Necessities called for *Men and Womens Meetings* to be established gradually, and settled, as now is, by the Power of God ; But some, who in the beginning, as was in the Apostles dayes, may have known the breaking forth of the Power of God ; and divers Operations of it, and in that day had good desires raised up to persevere in the way of his Judgments, until Judgment should be brought forth to Victory, and so begun in the Spirit, and served God in what he called them unto, as they were faithful ; yet notwithstanding this, though Truth might be precious to such then, and alwayes is to every one that keeps in it, and wait to know the way of it, in submitting their Wills to the Will of God, that his divine Wisdom and heavenly Spirit may still guide them, and direct them, yet notwithstanding we know some have stept out of the Simplicity of Gods Truth, and have entred into their own Reasonings, and dark Wisdom, and brutish Knowledge, and so have stumbled at what God hath, and now is bringing forth concerning our *Men and Womens Meetings* aforesaid, and the like, and the Services of such Meetings, appointed by the Power of God ; and so seeing the Prosperity of such Meetings and Services, they are entred into a fretting, peevish-spirituality against such things, and so gradually hardning, through setting up their own Reasons in their own Wills, and leaning to their own Understandings, have grown into such a Confidence, either against such Meetings, or some of the good Services of them, that at last they have become so Prejudiced, that that which at first seemed to be but as a little *Fault-finding*, or *Jealousie in their Minds*, is gradually

dually come to be grown into a Mountain of Opposition, and for want of a perseverance, and enduring to the end in that Spirit in which they begun well, some have fallen, and are falling from the Power of God, and from the Sense of their Elders and Brethren in the Truth, and have run out against them, and some at last have Printed and Published, as now W. R. hath done, who could not abide sound Life and Doctrine. And therefore, I pray and beseech God, that none may fall into this Snare, who are yet preserved out of it. but that they may be preserved simple before the Lord, as in the beginning, when the Lords Power broke forth in them, and melted their Hearts into Tenderness, & so will God bless them, and still keep them in the Simplicity of his Truth, and honour them, that they may witness the Election to obtain, and never to be deceived by false Glosses and fair Pretences, &c.

I remember, formerly God preparatively was at Work, in order to reveal that Mystery, which had been hid from Ages and Generations, since the Apostles dayes; and some were convinced of Sin, and had sights of good things to come, and in some measure came to be separated from the Sins of the Times, and they did see a necessity of separating from the gross Multitude in their Worshipps, and so did desire to seek after God, and to wait upon him, and the Lord touched them sometimes, and made them sensible of the necessity of still pressing forwards after the enquiry of better things than they then were made Partakers of; and some of these, who after this continued simple, and had their Eye to the Lord, and were so pursued with Judgment for Iniquity, that they could not fully give up the Reigns to it, and so were under the Spirit of Judgment and Bondage, or at Times, as I may say, great Fears; these thus travelling on in their Spirits, and being kept in this Exercise, when the Power of the Lord broke forth in our Nation, it met with many such, and they received the Truth with us, in the Love of it, and came to witness the Operation of it, and are preserved in it, & will be forever, as still they press forwards in their true Enquiry to discern & know the Way of God's Spirit, and the Products of his holy Power.

Now there were some, who, as aforesaid, were touched and convicted with the Light of Christ Jesus in their own Consciences, and for a time continued seeking after a farther Condition, than that of living in Sin, under the Notion & Profession of *Christianity*; but after

a time, going from the Simplicity of Innocent Enquiry after the Lord, and his Power and Gospel, they became *Wise in Notions*, and aspired to *Christianity* with the *Fragments of Old, Broken and Weak Experiences*, together with the Addition of their own *Comprehensions, Wit and Invention*, and so became Wise in their own Conceits, and so fell back into the low Worldly Things, in a Worldly Spirit, & a Self-Righteous, and a Pharisaical State: Now these, when the Truth and Doctrine of the Light of Jesus, in the Evidence of God's mighty Power, came to be published, as the Pharisees did, so they did, even rebel against it, and as bad as the common Priests, became our bitter Enemies under specious and fair gilded Pretences, &c.

Now, this I relate as a Caution to those now who have received the Truth in the Love and Simplicity of it, that they may take heed and keep to it in Simplicity, that their Understandings may be kept open, and their Hearts chaste and pure to Christ and God, then will they in the Faith still follow on to know, that at last they may come to be so established, that the Devil can have Power no more to deceive them with all his Glosses and fair Pretences; but they who are Careless, and keep not to the Simplicity of Truth, as it is in Jesus, but let out their Minds into a false Liberty, and in their Hearts are disobedient to God, though they have known the Power of God in some measure, and once were desirous to know his Salvation, yet notwithstanding, going from the Power and Cross of Jesus, into a false Liberty of ushering their own Self-Wills and Wits in Truth's Matters, endeavouring to comprehend the Simplicity of the Way of God's Spirit, and the Products of his heavenly Power, by leaning and trusting to their own Understandings, though otherwise they may appear in a Self-Righteousness, with fair Pretences and Glosses, to deceive the Hearts of the Simple, yet for all this God will find them out; and this is too much the Condition of W. R. and his Adherents; who, had they kept to the Simplicity of the Government of the pure and chaste Power of God, in their own Particulars, they would not have grown so Fool-hardy as to be seen Publishing and Patronizing such a Treacherous Wicked Book, as that falsely called, *The Christian-Quaker, &c.*

Now one thing more I have to say at this time, in relation to such tender simple-hearted Friends, as may be ready to stumble at the appointing of *Mens and Womens Meetings*, - *fearing lest it should bring*

bring in Formality, and usher in an Apostacy; and some are too ready, to strengthen such a jealousy in them, by telling them, Now you see the Apostacy is coming in, for so it came in, in the Primitive Times, by setting up Councils, and Meetings, &c.

Unto which I Answer; Though some have in this day been found too much promoting such false Doctrine amongst simple People, to make them evil affected with our blessed Meetings, in the Power of Christ, yet I say, the Apostacy first came in by departing from the Power of God, and then their Meetings were empty Forms, without the Power, and they fell into Confusion, and Disorder, and many Sects, and divers false Opinions, and so all along to our day, the Apostacy hath continued amongst all, who have not come to the true Faith that stands in the Power; and this we clearly came to see, when we were convinced of Gods holy Truth, and to declare (as we still do, and I hope ever shall) against all such formal Worships, as are set up by the Will and Wit of man; but had they stood in Gods Counsel, they would have known the Heavenly Worship in Spirit and Truth, and been one with us in this day, but their Meetings being out of the Power, is the Ground we cannot own them, and therefore the Primitive Meetings, before the Apostacy came in, now come to be restored amongst us, and the heavenly Power of Jesus to be the Author of them, and not a worldly Pope or Bishop, &c.

And so let none be jealous at our appointing Meetings for Gods Work and Service in his holy Truth, because they may be very sensible of the Antichristian Meetings all abroad, where the Meeters and Assemblers together, band together against Gods holy Truth, and the Possessors of it.

And let none be jealous, That we have not the same Care of Gods Honour and Glory, that we had when the Truth broke first out amongst us; but rather believe, that our Godly Care is encreased, and doth still encrease, and that we are still of God, neither dare nor can appoint or set up any thing against the Truth, but for the Service of it, as the Lord moves us, and that the Power of the Lord may still be the Authority and Ground of all our Meetings, and all Friends may encourage one another in that which is Virtuous, Holy, Clean and Comely, to the Praise of the Everlasting, and only Wise God, who lives and reigns forever.

And

And this in pure Love was upon my Spirit to write, as a Caution to Honest-hearted Friends, to take heed of that Spirit of W. R. and his Abettors, and of J. S. and J. W. who shelter under it, who will not be seen to Print themselves, but have afforded W. R. matter to fill up his Book with, who is so Imperious and Malicious, that it seems he takes little heed what he saith or doth; Thus have they and their Adherents endeavoured to betray us to the World, Judas-like, and like all others who have been found in the same Evil and Ungodly Work with them.

And I truly desire they may come to see what Master they serve, and whose Work they are doing, and Repent, and call in and judge all their Evil Work, which they have Printed and spread abroad, to defile Simple and Ignorant Minds with; for the Wise in Heart see both it and them, and are taught how to avoid it all.

London, the 12th of the }
3d Moneth, 1681. }

C. Taylor.

Page 3. line 15. dele *who*. P. 6. l. 36. dele *give in*.

THE END.

Books Printed for *John Brinkhurst*, viz.

The Life of Christ magnified in his Minister; Or, certain Testimonies thereof, relating to his Faithful Servant GILES BARNARDISTON, &c. Price 3 d.

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